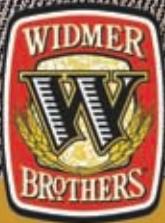


EUGENE WEEKLY'S STATE OF SUDS IS SPONSORED BY



CRUX-A-POSITION

Bend's newest brewery blasts off BY PATRICK NEWSON

Crux Fermentation Project, which opened its doors June 30, sits on an 11-acre plot of land adjacent to Highway 97 smack in the center of Bend. Open space for hop-growth, concerts, barbecues and a dog-park pale in comparison to the majestic East Cascade view reflected in the glass, copper and stainless steel of the new brewery in town. Most of those shiny tanks at Crux haven't had a chance to be used yet.

Larry Sidor, brewer, owner and wrench-wielding auteur of the Fermentation Project, leads me through his facility. It's "a brewery that happens to be a pub," he says. Sidor is sensitive about the subject of brew pubs without breweries. At Crux, however, transparency is a part of the aesthetic. Conditioning tanks fill the glass-walled room behind the bar; recycled wood strapped with old iron belts form the counters and pub tables which, when not choked by crowds, will function as packaging and boxing stations for the eventual bottling line Sidor aspires to install. Before all that, though, the first project must be completed: beer.

Sidor, former brewmaster at Deschutes, whose parting gift to his previous place of work was the Chainbreaker White IPA, has not recently released any beer, but is holding in-tank an East-bold IPA hopped with Centennial, Cascade and Bravo, registering a citric 7.5 percent alcohol by volume.



LARRY SIDOR

Closer to public dissemination is a deliciously hoppy Northwest Pale Ale I sampled from the fermenter, as Sidor showed me some of the more storied equipment he has at his disposal. The mill, for example, is the first that Sidor ever operated, 38 years ago as a novice at Olympia Brewing in Tacoma, Wash.; the hop-vac, gifted to Sidor from BridgePort Brewing as a favor; and Sidor's personal beer cooler, sitting beside his cluttered desk within earshot of the bar, has "seen more hops than most Oregon breweries," he reckons, due to its decades-long former occupation as the daily-refreshed hop-sample storage locker at a large producer. And all this sits in a former Aamco shop and mill supply store.

The Crux hopper is just down the hall, in the main pub area. A wooden sliding door opens to a walk-in, temperature-controlled room from which waft rich scents of pine, skunk and citrus permeating the public forum with the obvious quality of product.

For Sidor, quality product is the primary goal. After working for years on the systems of others, Sidor's own fermentation project, complete with open-top fermenters, barrels and other avenues of brewing exploration, is to employ the rock-climbing term, the crux, the most difficult and satisfying part of Bend's beer scene. ■

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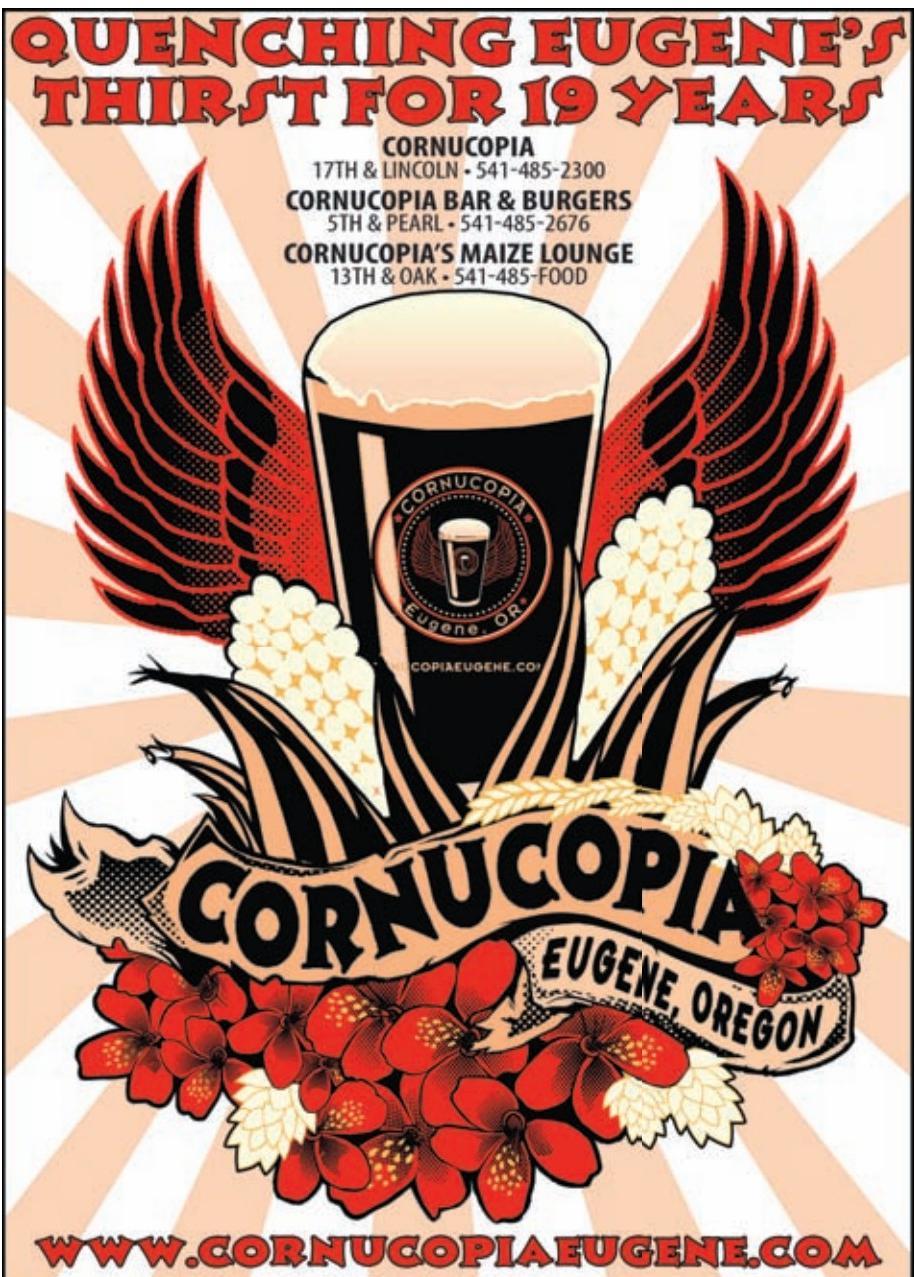
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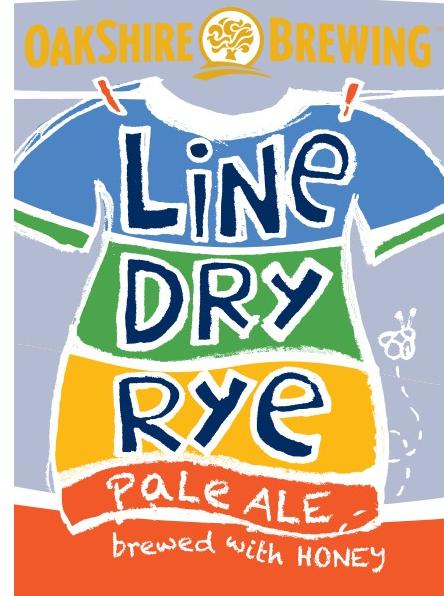
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YEAST STOCK

PHOTOS BY TRASK BEDORTHA

THE YEAST CONNECT

Home brewers collab and reculture BY ANDREW HITZ

In ancient civilizations, the transformation of sugar into alcohol was a ritual performed by diviners and seers. Vats of grape juice and sweet grain nectar were left before altars, prayed over by priests and, if given the proper time and alignment, would morph into a satiating and consciousness-altering beverage. The ancient Sumerians took their beer with a hefty dose of spirituality.

These days, however, home brewers and commercial brewers alike have a slightly different relationship with their beer. Not only do they have access to a plethora of different yeast choices, but many commercial brewers like Ninkasi keep close tabs on their yeast by way of labs and chemists. Commercial breweries also tend to have so much yeast that it's spouting out of their tanks by the gallon.

Yeast, as any home brewer knows, is the most expensive ingredient involved in the brewing process. So nowadays it's standard practice for a homebrewer to sterilize a Mason jar, bring it down to a local brewery and get a free batch of house yeast.

Why does this hook-up exist? Why would a mighty commercial brewer take time away from brewing to help some mere homebrewer?

"It's definitely related to Jamie's home brewing experience and his neighborhood-friendly methodology," Ninkasi cellar supervisor Louie Carter says. He is referring to Jamie Floyd, Ninkasi co-owner.

Ninkasi started with a standard English ale yeast, Fullers, and has been selecting the best qualities in that yeast ever since. This yeast is also noticeably different now than when it was first being cultured, no doubt swayed and morphed by the environmental conditions of the Whiteaker.

"Generally, we'll select the healthiest or best-performing, best-tasting yeast," Carter says. "If it coincidentally goes up above our normal 10-20 generations, then we might keep it [to reculture with]."

In brewing, a generation is equivalent to one batch of beer. After the yeast has completely metabolized all possible fermentable sugars in a batch of beer, it can be used for reculturing another batch. For Ninkasi, this can happen nearly 20 times before they deem the yeast unviable and start a new yeast culture from a library of yeasts. Yes, that's right, they have a library of yeasts.

"We have a lab here, and every time we pitch we'll do a cell count and viability check and that's mostly what we base our preferences on when we harvest," Carter says. "We also have the beginnings of a yeast

bank. So we basically have our own library of whatever yeasts we want."

Selecting strains of yeast ensures consistency in brewing and, at near craft-brewing size, as Ninkasi is, it's a necessity.

"I would say that [the yeast] has adapted to our style of beers," Ninkasi head brewer Mark Henion says. "With the higher hop loads and alcohol levels, I think it is fair to say only the strongest will survive."

Ninkasi's yeast is as domineering as the brewery's beers are delectable to the palate. For home brewers, that means that fermentation time, depending on yeast-to-wort ratio, will be shorter, and attenuate well. For most brewers in the Northwest, hopheads and the like, that's exactly the desired effect. ■



LAB MANAGER DANA GARVES AT NINKASI

BARRELING FORWARD

Bend's 10 Barrel Brewing Company ups the ante BY PATRICK NEWSON

If this brewery only produced 10 barrels of beer, as its name might imply, Eugeneans would never have heard of it. Eastern Oregon would've drunk up everything and there would be nothing left for us to sip on. "We had to either grow or stagnate," Brewmaster Jimmy Seifrit says. "We built this to expand."

He is talking about 10 Barrel Brewing Company's massive facility that became functional in February of 2012. Located on a 41-acre plot outside of Bend, this place has bumped up production to 100,000 barrels, as well as provided for downtown Bend's annual drunk and disorderly Freedom Ride bicycle tour.

The new state-of-the-art brewery features massive tanks, fermenters, access catwalks, huge exposure-conscious windows and a rogue skateboard. "It's meant to provide a fun and creative environment for us," Seifrit says as he climbs up, over and around the brewery like it's some giant jungle gym or beer-soaked playground.

10 Barrel is perhaps best known for its Apocalypse IPA, which constitutes some 50 percent of the brewery's total production. Other stand-by brews such as S1NISTØR Black IPA, India Session Ale and Oregon Brown Ale make up the rest of what 10 Barrel has to offer.

Along with these four hop-centric signature beers, Seifrit and company have produced extraordinary seasonal ales. There's the delicious biscuity Kolsch, the Northwest Red Ale and a strong pale ale also.

And not only does 10 Barrel Brewing crank out these fine beers en masse, it also has a lively pub with a killer menu. It's really just one more reason to visit, and salute the eastern side of our sudsy state. ■



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The ancient Sumerians worshipped the beer they made and praised the Goddess Ninkasi for the miracle of fermentation. Beer is a staple of civilization. **WORSHIP THE GODDESS.**

A GARAGE GROWS

Sam Bond's soon to brew beer BY DANTE ZÚÑIGA-WEST

It's no secret that Sam Bond's Garage is a venue where Eugeneans can go to experience lively bands (both local and touring) put on first-rate shows. Many a music lover has spent an evening or two taking in the laid-back atmosphere, the raging concerts and the impressive selection of beer that Sam Bond's has to offer. But now there is more to look forward to — specifically, more beer. Sam Bond's is in the process of opening its own brewery.

"We're beer lovers, and this is the next step," owner Mark Jaeger says.

It turns out that the idea of Sam Bond's having its own brewery was always a goal of Jaeger and company. Jaeger wanted to have a brewery that physically existed inside the current Sam Bond's venue, but the limited space did not allow for this.

Jaeger says that the brewery was the original idea. "Then the music took over. But we've been planning this for years."

So what do you do when the incredible little beer pub and music venue you started is too small to brew beer in, but you really want to start cranking out your own brand of cerveza? You go big.

"We have a huge old warehouse of a building," head brewer Jim Montgomery says. "It gives me plenty of space to brew in."

In a building Jaeger says is colloquially known as "The Foundry," located at 540 East 8th St., Montgomery is preparing to concoct what will soon

become staples of Eugene's beer-drinking and show-going community.

"The brewery will be representative of the bar [Sam Bond's]," Montgomery says. "Not fancy but functional, industrial with an old timey feel."

Montgomery is a transplant from the Bay Area, with more than 12 years of brewing experience. A chemical engineering buff who fell in love with beer making, he spent time working for a small brewery in Spain before returning to the states. Montgomery says the Spaniards weren't too into microbrews, and they preferred hot-weather lighter beers in general. This is what drove him back to the U.S.

"I'm excited to be in Eugene," Montgomery says. "Anyone can open a brew pub but Sam Bond's has a great music venue to go with it. Which is awesome."

So sometime shortly after the upcoming new year, keep your eye out for the first of many new brews by way of Sam Bond's. Montgomery expects to have three to four standard beers at all times, with three or four seasonal ales that will correspond to the weather. Rumor has it that an English pale ale, a German wheat beer and a hoppy IPA may be the first of Sam Bond's new beer brand. With Montgomery's experience at larger commercial breweries, as well as smaller independent operations, the best of both worlds is about to show up in your Stein (or Mason jar).

"We're not trying to reinvent the idea of a brewery," Montgomery says. "I'm trying to make these beers solid Northwest quality and carry on the microbrewery tradition here." ■



JIM MONTGOMERY

PHOTOS BY TRASK BEDORTHA

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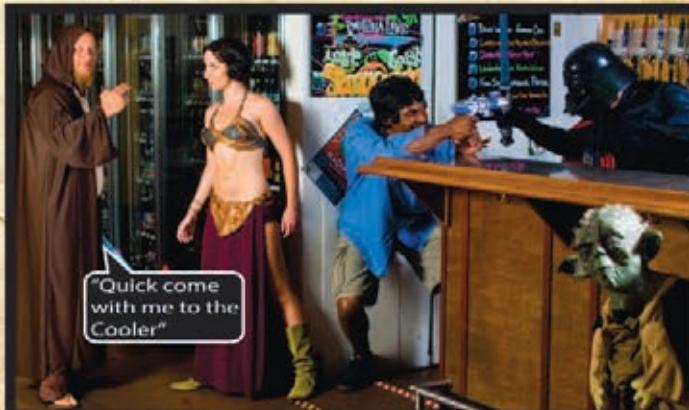
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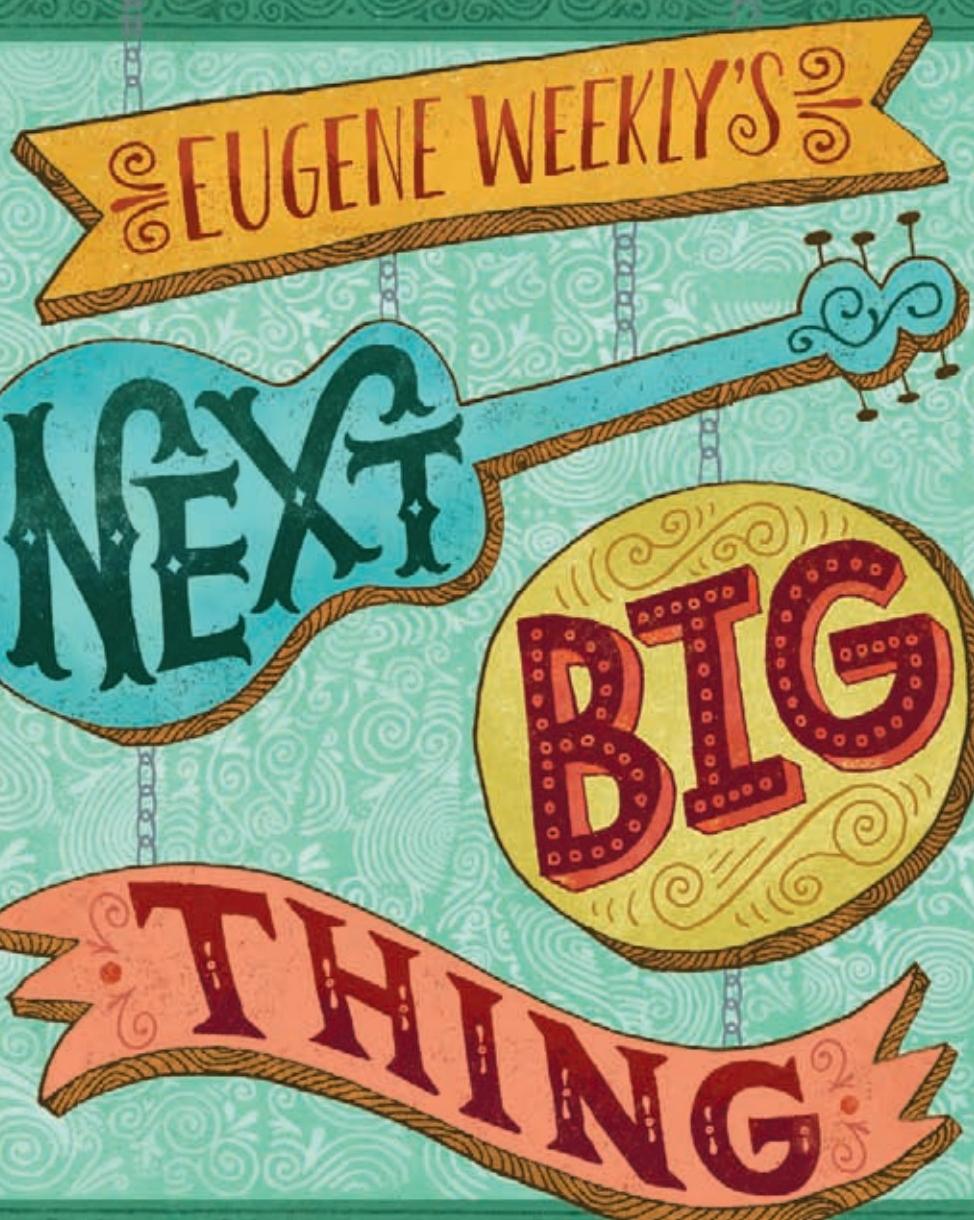
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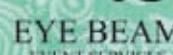
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JASON CARRIER

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SKY HAS FALLEN

Local brewing at Falling Sky BY ALI ENRIGHT

As somewhat of a beer virgin, I met up with part owner and brewery manager Jason Carriere to find out why Falling Sky Brewing's beer has Eugene buzzing. Carriere began brewing in 1999 while working as a scientist on the Human Genome Project at Stanford. "Brewing was so similar to what I was already doing; they both use biochemistry and biology," Carriere says. In 2002 he purchased the Valley Vintner & Brewer, and since then he has formulated a team of four to create the Falling Sky family at its former location. Brewers Scott Sieber and Michael Zarkesh bring their brewing expertise, while former New York restaurant owner Rob Cohen oversees the eatery.

With an exceptional brewing system found primarily in Germany and only a few places in Oregon, Falling Sky is

working to bring fresh elements to traditional Northwest brews. Taking pride in this system, Carriere says it's what sets Falling Sky apart from other local breweries.

"The design of the system allows us to make a lot of European beers in a more traditional manner than many North American breweries," Carriere says. And so while still providing brews that are cherished by Oregon beer lovers, Falling Sky is mixing it up.

"People come for the great food and the great beer, but the clincher is the environment," Carriere says. With the attentive service, communal picnic tables and comfortable outdoor seating, the great food and beer seem almost like an added bonus.

Falling Sky reaches a wide demographic through diverse taps. By incorporating sessionable beers, or brews with lower than 5 percent alcohol by volume, this brewery is all about getting everyone to savor suds. In addition to the lower gravity beers, Falling Sky now

boasts its first gluten-free beer for those who have to steer clear of wheat and other gluteny-grains. "We are still getting input and perfecting the taste," Carriere says.

Veteran beer drinkers and newbies alike can mingle at Falling Sky, sipping on favorites like the Golden Naked Blonde, Hey Hay IPA or 2 Towns Ciderhouse Incider. And don't worry, you won't grow tired of the menu.

"People are drinking the beer faster than we can brew it, so our menu changes," Carriere says. He explains that it takes about three weeks for a batch to be completed and about two weeks for customers to drink it, so there is a constant rotation.

"We tried to create a place that's both simple and beautiful," Carriere says. "Just because we are casual doesn't mean we can't provide the best quality in beer."

That quality is what sticks with you when you walk away from Falling Sky, a quality that will be sure to bring you back for another glass. ■

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SOAK UP THE SUN WHILE SUCKING YOUR SWILL

Cheap beer and gamesmanship BY ANDY VALENTINE

There's a bevy of crazy cheap beer out there that sud-suckers pretend to hate — you know, the industry standards like PBR, Hamm's and other such swill. If you're one of the many beer drinkers below the poverty line in our wonderfully indebted country, then there's probably a good chance you'll end up drinking that stuff at some point.

In this situation, I recommend making the best of what you've got: Don't sit alone at home in the dark drinking piss-in-a-can; take it outside into the sunshine and make a game of it. Besides, it tastes about as good warm as it does cold.

Enter Polish Frisbee (otherwise known as Fris-Knock or Polish Horseshoes and no, *EW* doesn't endorse Polish jokes; we didn't name this game), the drinking game that helps you forget how watered down the domestic section tastes, and perhaps a good way to taper off spending the last of your paycheck on beer.

The recipe is simple: four players, two empty 22 oz. bottles, two shoulder-height plastic PVC pipes, a Frisbee, a backyard and a 30-rack of something you don't mind spilling or savoring (see "swill" above). Set the poles up at either end of the backyard, balance the bottles on top and divide into teams of two.



From here the objective is simple: Using the Frisbee, knock your opponents' bottles to the ground before they hit yours. If the bottle is struck directly, that's worth two points; if the pole is struck but the bottle still falls, that's worth one. Play to five. Defense is allowed, but you gotta be at arm's length from the pole at all times until the bottle falls; you can make a crazy, diving save if need be.

Here's the (literal) catch that makes this more difficult than it sounds — you have to catch the Frisbee every single time it comes to your end, and you have to be holding a beer in one hand at all times. If you're a cigarette smoker, tough luck, you figure it out. If you fail to catch the Frisbee (or if the other team knocks you), then drink. If you lose the Frisbee on a roof, or it gets stuck in a tree, finish your fucking beer and go home, you terribly uncoordinated killjoy.

The simplicity in this wondrous pastime's framework allows for varying rules, so make up as many as you wish: penalty shots for awful throws, for example, work well. If there are more than four of you playing, then try three aside instead of making someone sit out.

As one grows older, the point of drinking games evolves as far beyond the goal of simply getting drunk. It becomes more like a sport in which drinking is just a perk, secondary to the actual fun of interacting with one another in friendly competition. At the end of the day, though, it's win-win; if you lose, you get the honor of having more deliciously bad swill sliding down your gullet.

Enjoy Polish Frisbee responsibly, as always, and eventually you might find that just being outside is, in itself, more than enough fun. Who knows? Perhaps alcohol isn't always a requirement on sunny afternoons. ■



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Brewmaster's barrel-conditioning puts the Oak in Oakshire

WORDS BY PATRICK NEWSON • PHOTOS BY TRASK BEDORTHA

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CALAPOOIA TASTING — 4-7pm • Market of Choice-Willakenzie, 2580 Willakenzie, Eugene

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Brewmaster Matt Van Wyck says the barrels are kept there so they won't inadvertently contaminate the other beers. "We hand-bottle these beers," Van Wyck says, "to keep the bacteria out of our main bottling line." And this series of single-batch wild and sour ales, constituting less than 1 percent of Oakshire's total production, are some of the most interesting and exciting beers in Eugene.

"To succeed as a brewery in the Northwest it used to be that you had to have a solid IPA, stout and pale ale," Van Wyck says. "The diversity and experimentation wasn't happening."

Since starting at Oakshire in 2009, Van Wyck has orchestrated dozens of single-batch beers — 20 so far this year. These one-off brews are usually made for special events, festivals, anniversaries or because an interesting or obscure ratio of malts, hops, yeasts and aging vessels is available.

But as far as these special cellar beers are concerned, "we don't really have batches that are oaked or wild," Van Wyck says. "We have about 40 barrels filled with beer. Sometimes a beer comes out unblended and sometimes we blend parts of several barrels."

The barrels, previously used in the maturation of gin, whiskey, bourbon and wine, have reached the status of "neutral" by the time they get to Oakshire. So what remains is a porous vessel.

"Each barrel is different," Van Wyck says. "The organisms in the wood are constantly conditioning the barrels." These organisms are Brettanomyces and Lactobacillus, wild yeasts that chew through sugars and are often unable to be fermented by regular Saccromyces yeast. These yeasts provide earthy, leathery, funky, sweaty and barnyard-like aromas, while creating tart and sour aftertastes to finish the job.

This technique is similar to the way vintners utilize a secondary malolactic fermentation or a barrel-conditioning program in many wines to achieve rich and unique flavors.

It makes sense then, that Van Wyck would concoct a barrel-conditioned framboise in neutral pinot noir and cabernet barrels, then fill half of them with 42 pounds of raspberries — which, of course, also harbor wild yeast — and let the other half age until blending time in the special tank near the back door to avoid releasing the contagion to the normal beers.



MATT
VAN
WYCK

"Coming soon is the best I can do," Van Wyck says. "These beers are not a consistent product year after year."

So far, Van Wyck's reserve includes two rounds of Hellshire Imperial Stout and a Skookumchuck Sour Pale Ale. We can only speculate what else he has tucked away. With different fruits and different strains of yeast, Van Wyck says that every round of cellar brew is different each time.

"As long as there's fermentable sugar, the sky's the limit," he says. ■

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Oakshire Line Dry Rye 22oz **\$2.99!** (reg. \$3.95)

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and

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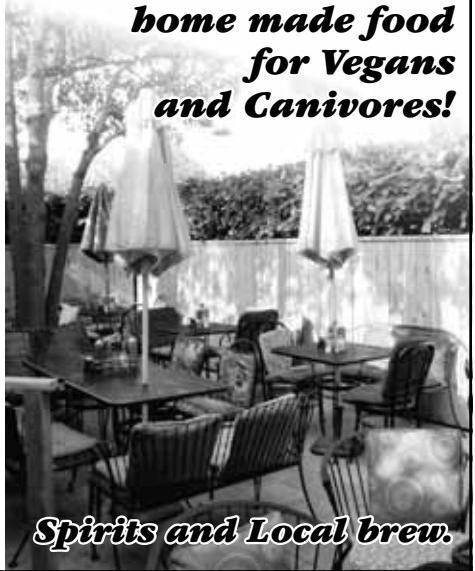


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